



# TEXAS FORESTRY

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ESTABLISHED IN 1914 – FOR PEOPLE INTERESTED IN FORESTRY ISSUES.

## 🌲 TRINITY-NECHES FOREST LANDOWNERS ASSOCIATION 🌲 NAMED 2019 FRIEND OF CONSERVATION

In April, the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board awarded the Trinity-Neches Forest Landowners Association (TNFLA) with the 2019 Friend of Conservation Award, Region IV. The nomination was submitted by the Cherokee County Soil and Water Conservation District.

Included in the nomination were many examples of the good works the TNFLA does for working forests and forest landowners in their area. Following are just a few of those examples:

- The association works closely with local soil & water conservation districts and NRCS in support of community conservation activities. Association members participate actively in EQIP local workgroup meetings and contributed to the planning and organization of a new event for Cherokee County S&WCD: an open invitational forestry workshop and contest in April 2018.

- TNFLA is a sponsoring partner of the Cherokee County S&WCD's youth education activities, is a faithful contributor to TP&WD's annual local Youth Hunt, provides scholarships and meals for participants in the Teacher Conservation Institute (by Texas Forestry Association.) and donates to Texas Farm Bureau and TA&MFS' student forest awareness tours.

- With 133 members, TNFLA is one of the largest forest landowners association in East Texas, offering continuing education, technical assistance and professional networking opportunities. Conservation of natural resources is a priority with the goal of ensuring sustainable forestry through wise forest management practices.

- With assistance from the Cherokee County S&WCD and NRCS along with TP&WD, Quality Deer Management Association, TAMU Agri-

Life Extension Service and the forest service, TNFLA sponsored a field day in April 2018. 102 landowners attended the event at the 2,000+ acre I.D. Fairchild State Forest located near the Neches River. Topics included understory management techniques for wildlife, silviculture, shortleaf pine restoration, food plots and wildflowers for pollinators, all with an emphasis on forest management practices which benefit wildlife habitat.

- The TNFLA has set a standard of excellence with their commitment to conservation. In recent years, two members have won State Tree Farmer of the Year awards; TNFLA won an award from Texas Forestry Association for being the organization with the largest number of members who are also TFA members; and, currently in progress is the compilation of a training video for the forest service filmed on TNFLA members' timber properties.



**David Basinger (center), Area IV Board Member for TSSWCB presented the award to TNFLA board members, Phil Power (left) and David Fulton (right). A more formal presentation will be held at the TSSWCB Awards Luncheon on October 29 in San Antonio.**

Seven counties are served by the Trinity-Neches Forest Landowners Association: Cherokee, Anderson, Freestone, Leon, Henderson, Van Zandt and Houston. TNFLA, along with 15 other local county forest landowner associations, serving 33 counties, are active members of Texas Forestry Association's Texas Forest Landowners Council. The Council meets six times each year to discuss issues, programs, management and more. A list of the local associations is found at [www.texasforestry.org](http://www.texasforestry.org) under Programs.

Texas Forestry Association congratulates the members of the Trinity-Neches Forest Landowners Association for an award that is well-deserved. Good job!

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## From the Executive Director

Happy Summertime! Since  
the beginning of the year, due to  
the Texas Legislative Session,  
we've been attempting to keep  
everyone up to speed on legislation  
that would affect TFA members  
positively or negatively. Let me  
take this time to shift gears and  
talk about some daily issues that  
happen here at your Association.  
Two issues came up this spring  
that are great examples of how our

coalition-building has had positive  
effects on members.

The first example, and there are  
many similar ones, has to do with  
a county appraiser in Northeast  
Texas charging property taxes on  
a Texas Logging Council member's  
logging equipment. Several years  
ago, TFA pushed legislation for  
logging equipment to be considered  
as "implements of husbandry" and  
therefore not subject to be taxed  
due to the agriculture nature of our  
industry. TFA/TLC corresponded  
with this new appraiser and  
transferred documentation to  
inform them of the timber industry's  
exemptions. This could have  
worked out eventually on its own;  
however, due to the tax deadline,  
we had to quickly move into action  
to help our member avoid penalties  
or having to pay the invoice and then  
wait for a refund. This scenario has  
happened more times than I would  
have ever believed.

Secondly, a group of landowners  
in Southeast Texas with current  
timber valuation were requesting  
transfer to wildlife valuation, and  
they were rejected by the county  
appraiser. Their consulting forester  
contacted us and sent a picture  
of the appraiser's guideline book

with this highlighted "a wildlife  
valuation cannot be proceeded  
by timber valuation" to which we  
answered, just because it's in the  
book, doesn't make it correct.  
Through TFA's relationships within  
the state comptroller's office, we  
determined that the latest update  
to their appraiser's guideline book  
had a misprint; they had printed a  
previous version of that particular  
section, before our change in  
the law several years ago that  
does allow for forest landowners  
to transfer their valuation from  
timber to wildlife. Fortunately, our  
friend at the comptroller's office  
was proactive and contacted the  
appraiser directly and the situation  
with several landowners was  
corrected that day. And, by the way,  
the landowners were so impressed  
they joined TFA - that day!

We exist to serve in any way  
we can and nothing gives us more  
satisfaction than to hear these two  
words, thank you. Well, it's our  
pleasure!

See you soon,

Rob



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ANNUAL  
MEETING

Wood You Believe

OCTOBER 16-18, 2019 #BackInNac

## ▲ IN REMEMBRANCE ▲

Dr. Mary Lynn DeShazo, of Huntsville, passed away in April. Mrs. DeShazo was an Associate Dean and taught chemistry at Sam Houston State University. She was a dedicated member of TFA for many years.

Charles Smither, also of Huntsville, passed away last month after complications from open-heart surgery. A forest landowner, Mr. Smither was currently on the Board of Directors of Texas Forestry Association and he served on TFA's Texas Forest Landowners Council.

Dr. Quentin Burnett of Cushing passed away suddenly on June 12th. A former school superintendent and chief financial officer (retired), Dr. Burnett was a forest landowner and he served on the TFA Board of Directors and FORPAC Committee.



## **Issues and Trends reported from the Forest Resources Association Annual Meeting**

### Numerous Challenges Around Trucking

- It is estimated that the truck driver shortage is resulting in a 10 to 15% loss of logging production currently. Multiple industries compete for drivers, and good, reliable trucking is very expensive.

- Trucking insurance rates have escalated, and fewer companies are willing to write commercial vehicle insurance policies. Insurance carriers have tightened age, experience, and clean Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) requirements for drivers.

- Many trucking contractors are now installing GPS tracking systems and dash cameras to better manage trucking efficiency and safety, and to fight off unwarranted truck crash lawsuits and insurance claims.

- In addition to state efforts to address various trucking issues (see this South Carolina example), forest products companies, wood suppliers, and state associations are encouraged to support the TEAM Safe Trucking program financially and host TEAM trucking safety training sessions for trucking managers and drivers.

**Note:** TFA's Texas Logging Council Coordinator, Dave Duren, has presented four TEAM Safe Trucking workshops so far this year in Carthage, Jefferson, Lufkin and Silsbee in an effort to promote the online training program for truck drivers and contractors. To find out more about the training, email Dave at [dduren@texasforestry.org](mailto:dduren@texasforestry.org).

### **USDA Announces Availability of \$12.5 million in Conservation Innovation Grants**

USDA announced May 31st it is investing up to \$12.5 million to help support the adoption of innovative conservation approaches on agricultural lands. USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is accepting proposals through July 30, 2019, for national Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) and July 19, 2019 for state CIG funding opportunities. CIG projects inspire creative problem-solving that boosts production on farms, ranches, and private forests - ultimately, they improve water quality, soil health, and wildlife habitat. All U.S.-based non-Federal entities and individuals are eligible to apply.

#### *National CIG*

CIG support the development and field testing, on-farm research and demonstration, evaluation, or implementation of conservation technologies, practices, and systems and approaches to incentivizing conservation adoption. Grantees must match the CIG investment at least one to one.

Applications for this national CIG must be submitted through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) by 5 p.m. Eastern Time on July 30, 2019. Information on how to participate in the webinar is posted on the CIG website.

#### *State NRCS CIG*

In conjunction with the national CIG, NRCS is also offering CIG state-wide competitions (awards maximum of \$75,000) in Texas. Projects must be within Texas and may be area-based or statewide in scope. Please visit [Texas NRCS www.tx.nrcs.usda.gov](https://www.tx.nrcs.usda.gov) for information about state CIG competitions.

### **District Forester Jason Ellis wins 2019 Forest Stewardship Forester Award**

Jason Ellis, Jacksonville District Forester for Texas A&M Forest Service, was awarded the 2019 Forest Stewardship Forester Award by the USDA Forest Service Southern Region and the Southern Group of State Foresters. Throughout his career, Ellis has consistently excelled at helping rural, private landowners achieve sustainable management of their forested lands throughout his district.

This award is presented to a person who has made a significant contribution to the advancement of the Forest Stewardship and Rural Forestry Assistance Program in their state or across the landscapes of multiple states. The winner has demonstrated exceptional leadership in promoting forest stewardship and excellent service to landowners and the public, among other qualities.

Ellis is looked upon, both by the landowners he serves and his colleagues in the field, as a knowledgeable expert on the Forest Stewardship Program and an excellent practitioner of the principles he recommends. He also oversees the management of the I.D. Fairchild State Forest, comprised of 2,360 acres of mixed Shortleaf pine and hardwood forests, located in Cherokee County. While managing the forest, he works tirelessly to maintain high-quality habitat for the endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker, lead habitat restoration projects to reintroduce Eastern Wild Turkey and restore native Shortleaf pine habitat.

In the past year, Ellis successfully harvested a stand of timber and left a shelterwood of Shortleaf pine to demonstrate successful natural regeneration to landowners. He also conducted tree planting, prescribed burns, mulching and herbicide applications throughout the forest to give landowners the opportunity to see different land management techniques to consider using on their properties.

### **Rent is Skyrocketing**

The rising cost of housing has led nearly a third of American households to spend more than the recommended 30 percent of their income on a mortgage or rent. Limited supply means rents in cities are skyrocketing, while rampant student debt is preventing many young people from buying homes.

### **Oil and Gas Surge**

Oil, natural gas and coal contribute three-quarters of the energy consumed in the U.S., even with the rapid rise of renewable sources. While coal production has been declining for a decade, the advent of fracking and advances in drilling have driven oil and gas production to record levels and turned the U.S. into the world's largest producer of the fuels. The surge in oil and gas output that began nearly 15 years ago has made the oil and gas industry one of the biggest engines of the U.S. economy, and now companies are rapidly growing their exports of the two energy sources, a development that was virtually unfathomable at the turn of the century.

### **U.S. Secretary of AG Reaches out to Lumber Mill**

At Harold White Lumber Mill in Kentucky recently, US Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue said many often don't think about timber and lumber as agriculture. In fact, the U.S. Forest Service is actually under the umbrella of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. "We have many acres (of timber) across the country and we feel private operators do it very well," Perdue said. "We are here to find out how we can better help with White's and their company, and what we can learn from them on how to better manage our national forests." As Perdue toured the facility and looked at the shutter line, in which hardwoods are used to create high-end shutters, Perdue said, "it's great to see a multigenerational family continue to innovate and create new products."

### **TFA Seeks Nominations for Excellence in Wood Design Awards**

The TFA Marketing Committee is now accepting nominations for the 2019 Excellence in Wood Design Awards. Nominations are open to projects completed in the last five years that aesthetically utilize wood and/or use wood products structurally. There are four award categories which include: 1) Institutional; 2) Commercial; 3) Residential; & 4) Special Projects.

To submit a project for this award please complete the application, include a cover letter with a brief description of the project, a description of the types of wood used in the construction process, along with digital photos of the nomination (CD format is preferred).

Nominations should be submitted to the TFA office by August 1. The award winners will be recognized at the TFA Annual Meeting, October 16-18, 2019 at The Fredonia Hotel in Nacogdoches. Applications are available on the TFA website at [www.texasforestry.org](https://www.texasforestry.org) under News or call 936-632-TREE (8733).



**Lynn Lewis, USFS Landowner Assistance Manager, Ken Arney, USDA Forest Service Regional Forester, R8, Jason Ellis, Texas A&M Forest Service District Forester, and Tom Boggus, Texas State Forester, attend the presentation ceremony at the annual Southern Group of State Foresters meeting in Franklin, Tennessee on Wednesday, June 19, 2019.**







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## 🌲 TEXAS STANDING TIMBER VALUES 🌲 FOR PINE as reported by Timber Mart-South 1st Quarter 2019

Product	Area	\$/Ton (average)
Pine Sawtimber	North Texas	27.76
	South Texas	26.08
		26.92 Avg
Pine Chip-N-Saw	North Texas	17.18
	South Texas	16.09
		16.64 Avg
Pine Pulpwood	North Texas	12.34
	South Texas	13.40
		12.82 Avg

**Product Specifications:** Sawtimber: 12" & up DBH , Pulpwood: 6" & up DBH, Chip-n-saw: 8" – 11" DBH

**Conversion/Log Rule and Weight Equivalents:** Sawtimber - 15,000 lbs. or 7.50 tons per MBF (Scribner), 16,000 lbs or 8.0 tons per MBF (Doyle), Pulpwood – 5,350 lbs. or 2.68 tons per Std. Cord

For additional information, visit Timber Mart-South's website at [www.TimberMart-South.com](http://www.TimberMart-South.com).

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**Holding the standards of our Code of Ethics is a requirement for membership; it forms the founding principles of our organization. The commitment is one of the reasons ACF members are revered as premier forest consultants, called upon by landowners across Texas to advance their individual goals for their wooded acres.**

## 🌲 FIELD NOTES 🌲

### HOW DO I REGENERATE A STAND AFTER A CLEARCUT?

After clearcutting a stand, landowners should first follow steps to prepare the site for new seedlings. This step is known as site preparation and it is vital for the health and survival of your planted pine seedlings. There are many different methods landowners can use to prepare a site for replanting, much like there are times when more than one tool can complete a job. One common method is for the logger to leave windrows, or debris piles of excess, unmerchantable slash while conducting the harvest. Next, the site should be treated with a prescription burn that will burn through the wind rows and debris and clear the site to help facilitate the process of hand or machine planting seedlings. In the late summer or early fall, herbicide should be applied to the tract to get rid of competing hardwoods and other vegetation that would otherwise compete with planted seedlings. Then, in the winter, we recommend that landowners plant pine trees, generally about 550-700 seedlings per acre. Whenever a clearcut harvest is conducted, it's important to go back and plant more trees than were harvested. To learn more about the clearcut harvest or if you have any other forestry-related questions, contact a professional forester near you. Source: Texas A&M Forest Service

#### Texas Deer Management Calendar

## July

M T W T F S S

1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
8 9 10 11 12 13 14  
15 16 17 18 19 20 21  
22 23 24 25 26 27 28  
29 30 31

Begin tabulating observations of deer, and classify all sightings as bucks, does or fawns. If you are feeding supplemental protein, continue this month. If corn feeders are in place, offer corn and monitor deer consumption using game cameras, especially if drought conditions have persisted throughout the summer.

*Dr. Billy Higginbotham, Professor Emeritus  
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service*

## 🌲 Wild Pigs and Deer Mix About As Well As Oil and Water 🌲

**Billy Higginbotham, Professor Emeritus, The Texas A&M University System**

Back in the 1980's, a common question received from hunters was "Where can I get just a few wild pigs to release for hunting after deer season closes"? My answer was always the same—"Having a few wild pigs is the equivalent of just being a little bit pregnant"! In other words, once you got 'em, the few can become many before you know it.

Let's be clear—we would not have the issues that wild pigs present in Texas today if they were not fun to hunt! Their popularity led to many trap, transport and release incidents all across the state, even though they were all illegal. Furthermore, the transplants took right well, too! As a result, Texas is home to the largest wild pig population of any of the 40+ states now harboring this non-native/exotic species. Our 2.6 million estimated population may well be between 25% and 35% of the nation's total head count of wild porkers.

As a landowner or a member of a hunting club focusing on white-tailed deer management, your tolerance of wild pigs should be very, very low. There is no middle ground here—wild pigs pose a threat to your deer management goals and should be dealt with using "extreme prejudice".

Unfortunately, deer and wild pigs share most of the same habitat throughout East Texas. If you have yet to encounter wild pigs on your place count yourself

as lucky for now.....It's not so much a matter of if they will show up but more a question of when!

Ecologically, they compete with deer for food, especially the mast crop (e.g., acorns). Given their aggressive behavior, a sounder of pigs feeding across an oak flat can vacuum up every last acorn that hits the ground.

Behaviorally, deer just don't tolerate wild pigs very well. I have often been hunting when deer would break and run for no apparent reason. Within a few seconds to a few minutes, a sounder of pigs appeared, disrupting the hunt. Additional evidence to support this fact is based on the thousands of game camera images I have from all across East Texas. I can count on one hand the number of images where pigs and deer appeared in the same frame, even at feeders.

How many of you use deer feeders on your land or lease? We run an estimated 300 million pounds of corn through deer feeders in Texas every year. How much of that corn is going to whitetails and how much of it is going to wild pigs?

I am convinced that we are making our wild pig problem worse by allowing them to have access to deer feeders. Increasing the nutritional plane of a wild pig sow via supplement meant for deer is a first class ticket to more pigs on the ground in the future.

This does not include the disturbance factor pigs cause when they show up at a feeder or food plot causing the deer to flee. It also does not take into account the value of the corn lost to wild pigs that was meant to go to whitetails.

I have always believed that the height of a fence necessary to keep wild pigs out is much lower than the height necessary to keep wild pigs in. To test this theory, we designed an experiment I nicknamed "How High Is High Enough?" in order to determine if we could deny pig access to feeders without (and here comes is the tricky part) reducing deer access to those same feeders.

In 2009, we conducted these trials in July and then repeated them in October. Deer feeders were distributed randomly across a property and game cameras recorded what critters responded to the corn buffet for two weeks.

Then, excluders were placed around six feeders. Six 16 foot long panels were used to form circular excluders that were about 30 feet in diameter—enough to

*(continued on page 8)*



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## 🌲 WILD PIGS AND DEER, cont'd. 🌲

capture almost all of the corn dispensed from the spin deer feeders over another two week period.

Two of the feeders were fitted with excluders 20 inches high, two at 28 inches high and two at 34 inches high. Again, the cameras recorded what species showed up and which ones could gain access to the feeding areas protected by the excluders of varying heights.

Larger wild pigs could easier breach the 20 inch high excluders but we had no pigs recorded inside the excluders at the 28 and 34 inch heights. More importantly, deer visits were not reduced at all compared to feeder visits when they were not fitted with excluders.

What this revealed to us is that properly designed excluders could limit pig access while affording whitetails full access to supplement. As a result of this study, I now recommend that deer feeders in habitats that deer and wild pigs share ALWAYS be fitted with excluder panels.

I also believe the six-panel system is a bare minimum—You may want to go to eight or ten panels to increase the feeding areas for multiple deer inside of the paneling.

The total cost of the six panel system using standard 34 inch high swine panels with the smaller graduated mesh placed against the ground is about \$175, including wire and t-posts. It does not take too long to recover your initial costs in the form of corn lost to pigs. Once installed, the feeder excluders should last for many years.

In cattle country, the design also seemed to be good at keeping them out as well. However, if cattle are gaining access, try stringing a single strand of barbed wire eighteen inches above the top of the panel tied to the t-posts to provide deer room to crawl through the opening.

Therefore, If I were King, the law of the deer hunting land with wild pigs present would be to "FENCE YOUR FEEDERS"!!!

What else can a landowner or hunting club do to level the playing field in this War on Wild Pigs? First things first--You must realize that you will never, ever, ever control a wild pig population while sitting on a deer stand!

Therefore, the number one method to use for wild pig control is to conduct an aggressive corral trapping program using Best Management Practices to substantially reduce the pig population present. Research clearly shows that corral traps are much more effective than small box traps.

The minimum corral trap size I will employ consists of four 16 foot long panels that are at least 60 inches tall with 4 inch by 4 inch mesh. If camera data over bait reveals more than about a dozen pigs in the sounder, I start adding panels to maximize the distance from the gate opening to the trigger.

I am not going to go into great detail here on the trapping process. For this info, go to the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension website at <http://feralhogs.tamu.edu> and follow the "Hogs in the Peaches" link for details of the trapping process from start to finish.

I can build an effective corral trap for \$500 using an old car tire for a trigger, and when the last pig is trapped, almost all of the trap components can be repurposed for other uses on the farm, ranch or hunting lease. Costs can be cut even more by sharing gates between traps.

However, even this trap design will not be effective unless you follow the  
(continued on next page)




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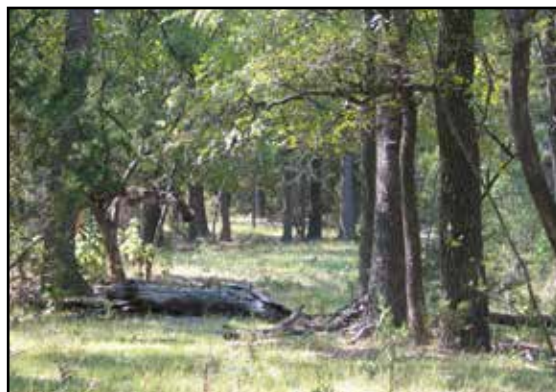
## WILD PIGS AND DEER, cont'd.

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We have traps that continue to catch pigs that have been in the same locations for more than twenty years. The key is to get them located in the right places initially. A corral trap will take several hours to erect so you don't want to have to move them too often.

Next time you find yourself in the Longview-Tyler-Henderson area, swing by the Texas A&M Agrilife Research and Extension Center at Overton. You will find an exhibit on the front lawn open 24/7 that depicts various recommended trap designs, gates and even an exhibit of the excluder fencing around a deer feeder.

Hopefully, you now have a better understanding of why wild pigs and whitetails don't mix. While, yesterday was the time to begin your engagement in the War on Wild Pigs, it's not too late to get started today. I can guarantee you that this exotic animal is not going to go away on its own!



August 9, 2019

## Branching Out

a seminar for forest landowners

### About the Program

Texas Forestry Association's Texas Forest Landowners Council will hold a seminar for forest landowners as part of their August meeting. Several informative topics will be presented - what a great opportunity to learn more about enriching your working forests!

Sponsored by:



### Who should attend?

Landowners, foresters, land managers and others

### Presentations

- **Farm Bill Cost Share Programs;** What Forest Landowners Need to Know by Mike Oliver, NRCS
- **National Wild Turkey Federation** plans for Texas by Annie Farrell, NWTF
- **Pines, PawPaws and Pocket Prairies** by Greg Grant, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
- **Learn Plan Act Texas**, a tool for engaging forest landowners by Linda Moon, Texas A&M Forest Service
- **The Hole Truth: Woodpeckers in the South** by Greg Grant, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

### Advance Registration

The fee for the workshop is \$20 and lunch is included; preregistration is required. Register online at [www.texasforestry.org](http://www.texasforestry.org) or mail registration to TFA.

**Continuing Education:** SAF requested; Texas Accredited Foresters 3.5 hours; Texas Pro Loggers 3.5 hours

### Location

Texas Forestry Association  
1903 Atkinson Drive  
Lufkin, TX 75901  
936-632-TREE  
[www.texasforestry.org](http://www.texasforestry.org)

9:45 am - 2:00 pm.

## Branching Out

A seminar for forest landowners

Friday, August 9, 2019 / Texas Forestry Association Training Room  
1903 Atkinson Drive, Lufkin, TX 75901  
Time: 9:45am (registration) – 2:00pm

### Registration Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Guest or spouse (if any) \_\_\_\_\_

### Cost

**\$20 per person**

ADVANCE REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT IS REQUIRED - **Register online** at [www.texasforestry.org](http://www.texasforestry.org) (Events) or mail registration to Texas Forestry Association, P.O. Box 1488, Lufkin, TX 75902-1488 or call 936-632-TREE (8733).

### Method of Payment

\_\_\_ Amount

\_\_\_ Check made payable to Texas Forestry Association

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# ▲ TEXAS BREAKS NEW GROUND IN EFFORT TO KEEP OUR ▲ FORESTS HEALTHY

On June 24, for the first time in Texas, Texas A&M Forest Service successfully merchandised, marketed and sold 224 acres of timber for the USDA Forest Service. This timber sale marks a successful step forward in the first phase of a larger Good Neighbor Authority project meant to nurture healthier, more resilient forests in Texas.

Under the Good Neighbor Authority agreement, Texas A&M Forest Service can augment the U.S. Forest Service's manpower and perform necessary forest management services on National Forest System lands.

For this project in the Sabine National Forest, Texas A&M Forest Service marked the stands, indicating where the timber should be thinned, and cruised them, which measures the volume of wood for 224 acres, and sold it. The stands will be thinned by the buyer within the next 18 months.

"When a forests' timber is left unmanaged, a forest can become stressed," said Wes Moorehead, the East Texas operations department head for Texas A&M Forest Service. "It's also more susceptible to disease and pests."

Thinning the timber in a stand, which is removing selected trees within a marked site in a forest, can reduce competition. The remaining trees have better access to the soil nutrients, water and sunlight they need to thrive, which leads to healthier trees.

"Once we're reimbursed for our time and resources, the net proceeds from the sale will be plowed right back into the U.S. Forest Service land," said Moorehead. "The U.S. Forest Service will then determine what management projects are the highest priority."

Working on national lands helps keep the Texas A&M Forest Service foresters current on local timber markets and silvicultural practices. The cooperation also creates a stronger relationship between U.S. Forest Service and Texas A&M Forest Service.

"It's been a wonderful experience working with the Texas A&M Forest Service so far," Lanton Chumley, the timber sales contracting officer for the U.S. Forest Service, said. "It gives their foresters more training, and it helps us with more capacity. We can speed things up with their help."

"We had a good relationship with U.S. Forest Service prior to this," Moorehead said. "But actually kicking the ground together, walking the ground, talking about what can and can't be done, what should and shouldn't be done, definitely reinforces those relationships."

The biggest advantage, as Texas A&M Forest Service sees it, is the health of the forest in Texas.

"We're working on the U.S. Forest Service's lands to help increase the resiliency and health of Texas' forests," Moorehead said. "When we help keep U.S. Forest Service lands healthy that can translate to keeping neighboring Texans' lands more resilient, too."



**Wes Moorehead, Texas A&M Forest Service East Texas Operations Department Head, and Kristi Keach, USDA Forest Service Timber Resource Specialist, survey a timber stand at the Sabine National Forest on June 24, 2019.**

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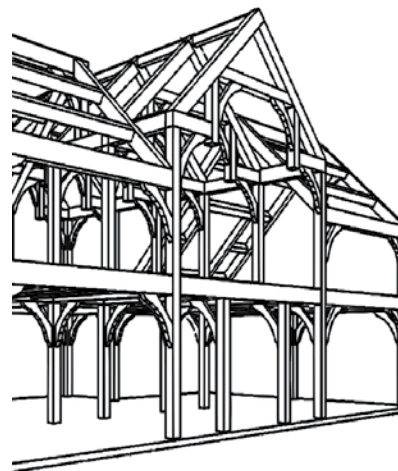


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Founded in 1914, TFA brings together a diverse membership that advocates both a healthy natural environment and a strong business environment for the benefit of all Texans.

Through its many programs, TFA promotes the understanding and acceptance of forestry conservation practices throughout the State of Texas.

### ***I want to join.***

Please check the category and annual dues amount representing your interest in forestry. Memberships are based on a calendar year.

- \_\_\_ Timberland owners: \$55 plus 4 cents per acre over 500 acres.
- \_\_\_ Individuals: \_\_\_ \$55 active; \_\_\_ \$15 student; \_\_\_ \$1,500 life.
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## 🌲 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE 2019 🌲

TFA's Legislative Team is proud of what was accomplished during the 86th Session of the Texas Legislature. The Timber Tax Fairness Act was signed into law by Governor Abbott and details of that are in Texas Forestry. The Log Loader Bill was signed by the Governor in June, this law will take effect September 1, 2019. These two bills were the focus of the Legislative Team this session but there were many other bills that were either endorsed or opposed on behalf of, not only our members, but all the Forest Sector from landowners, to loggers, manufacturers, and consumers in the marvelous State of Texas.

### Here are some of those bills and their outcomes:

HB 2439 - Relating to certain regulations adopted by governmental entities for the building products, materials, or methods used in the construction or renovation of residential or commercial buildings. TFA joined many building products companies, builders, and developers in endorsing this bill to stop city councils from passing ordinances that would prohibit or favor other building materials over wood products. This would not stop the organization of upscale subdivisions with restrictions, it would only stop the blanket, city-wide rulings that stop homeowners from using wood products on their exterior for instance.

Several bills were filed that would allow the state to regulate migrant worker housing. TFA joined the Texas ag community in opposing those bills, not because we are in favor of poor living conditions for migrant workers, but because the federal programs typically used by the agriculture community already have federal housing regulations. If our contractors had to comply with federal and state bureaucracies, it would further complicate the contracting of seasonal employees who perform tree planting, tree nursery work, pre-commercial thinning, etc. Through discussions, the bill writers agreed to work through the interim and revise their language to assist those migrant workers who are outside the federal programs.

HB 799 - Relating to liability for certain damage caused by vehicles exceeding maximum height limitations; creating a criminal offense. This bill makes hitting and damaging a bridge or underpass a criminal offense with up to a \$500 fine and 30 days in jail, plus, the entire cost of repairs or replacement. TFA opposed this bill due to its excessive penalties that may be incurred by our log and lumber transporters. Not that it happens often or that we believe the offender should not be responsible, but this bill was written because of the excessive damage to the transportation system in West

Texas by the booming oil and gas industry. Our forest sector could feel the pain of their fortune. This bill did pass and is awaiting the governor's signature.

HB 2292 - Relating to the operation of a slow-moving vehicle on an improved shoulder. Here's a common sense bill that TFA and other rural groups supported but unfortunately did not make it through the process. In current state law, the shoulder is not a lane of traffic... ok, so? So, since rural Texans "drive friendly, the Texas way", when we are in a slower vehicle like a tractor or pulling a trailer or just letting folks in a bigger hurry go by, we pull over on the shoulder to let them pass, right? Current state law says, if there is an accident no matter who is at fault, the person in the shoulder gets the blame simply because that's not a lane for traffic! We will certainly be looking for that one next session and will again fully endorse its common sense approach of making the shoulder in rural areas a "slow moving vehicle lane when necessary".

There were a few controversial bills that affected container ships in the Port of Houston that were on TFA's radar due to how it could affect exports of wood products. If boards and panels can't be sold, landowners and loggers will have to eat their trees so we supported the manufacturing sector every chance we could!

SB 317 - Relating to the taking of feral hogs without a hunting license. This bill has been signed by Governor Abbott and, please refer to TPWD, would allow hog hunting without a hunting license.

Also, there were a few bills that pertained to white-tailed breeder deer identification and the locations they are released into. This is a big industry that reaches into the piney woods; therefore, we consulted with and informed a few TFA members that have deer breeding facilities associated with their tree farms.

And, finally for this newsletter, it was another disappointing year for eminent domain reform. Along with many East Texas legislators, Texas Farm Bureau, Texas Wildlife Association and many others, TFA endorsed the new language put forth on behalf of private property owners in a bill that was very fair and more narrowly focused than in the past. Unfortunately, even though months of negotiation with organizations who profit from condemnation rights, eminent domain reform proved again to be too large of a hurdle to overcome. However, the progress in talks seemed positive and our legislators are still optimistic about continuing the discussion into the next legislative session.